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rights possessed by the *nebierni qmani*. Some of the bought peasants possessed their own lands, but the majority were landless and they received grants of land or other provision for maintenance from their patrons. At the time of buying, often, a special agreement was drawn showing the purpose for which a peasant was bought. If a patron required a man for some particular job he would naturally buy one skilled in that job. For instance, when Grigol Surameli the *Msakhurt-Ukhutsesi* built mills for the monastery of Shio-Mghvimé, he bought for these mills a "peasant-miller" and donated him to the monastery. This particular peasant then was bought as a professional, he was a miller skilled in the art of milling, besides which special duty he had no other duties to perform. From his descendants one member always had to be trained as a miller to serve in the mills.[1]

Shedsirulni qmani or dedicated serfs were serfs consecrated to the churches and monasteries. The rights and duties of such serfs were always put down in writing and clearly defined and limited in the dedicatory *sigelni* or charters. Their status was therefore permanent and unchangeable. A dedicated *qma* or peasant was consequently always a *siglosani qma*. It, however, must not be understood that every *siglosanni* serf was a dedicated serf. As the dedicated serfs were meant for the redemption and repose of the souls of the dead, their duty was to provide food, wine and other provisions for the dedicator's *aghapi* and to assist in every way in the annual memorial services. The dedicators when consecrating their serfs took special care that the *shedsirulni* were placed in good circumstances in order that they on their part might retain good memories of their late patrons and might pray for the blessing of their souls. The patrons, therefore, freed such serfs from all services and tributes due from them. Moreover, they endeavoured to obtain for them exemption or even complete immunity from taxation. The dedicator himself defined the rights and duties of the dedicated serf who usually was enjoined, as already stated, to provide the monastery with a certain quantity of bread and wine and once or twice a year with anything else that might be necessary for the service of a requiem mass and the preparation of *aghapi* for the brotherhood of the monastery and the destitute. The duties once defined by the dedicator were not subject to alteration either by the monastery or by anyone else. In a *sigeli*, dated 1202, it is stated that Anton Dchqon-

[1] *Book of Donations of the Year* 1250 *of Grigol Surameli*, edited by S. Kakabadze, p. 7.

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566 dideli, the *Mdsignobart-Ukhutsesi*, built an aqueduct for the
● 792 monastery of Shio-Mghvimé, dedicating at the same time Giorgi and Yaberi with their respective households, whose duties, specified by Antoni himself, were to look after the aqueduct. Except this, in the words of the dedicator himself—

> "No other service of any kind whatsoever is to be imposed upon them".
>
> "I fixed", says he, "as their duty the service of the aqueduct. From each of the two households one of the sons must be trained as an aqueduct fitter and thus maintain it in good working condition." [1]

Looking after the aqueduct was not then the duty of every member of the two households, but only of two, one from each, and each generation of each household was to provide one trained fitter to the monastery. The other members, while they were required to help in maintaining the aqueduct in good condition, could choose whatever profession they liked and do generally as it pleased them, the monastery having no other rights over them.

It is obvious that the owners of *shedsirulni qmani* could only have been the churches, the monasteries and charitable institutions. As the *shedsirulni qmani* were dedicated to secure the "redemption of the soul" and for the *aghapi* of their donors the monasteries and churches more particularly favoured were those that were renowned for their miracle-working icons or for the purity of their monastic life. For this reason the more renowned a monastery or a church was the more donations and dedications it received in the shape of lands and *qmani*. As a result of these customary dedications the Georgian Church early became the most powerful individual "patron" of serfs within the Kingdom.

566 *Shedsqalebulni qmani* constituted a particular group of *qmani*. The duty of all *qmani* towards their patrons was a loyal service. *Qmani* were important not only economically, but also from a military point of view. The power of a patron depended on the number of *qmani* he possessed and on the loyalty and devotion they showed. During a war *qmani* fought alongside their respective patrons. In recognition of devoted service, a patron would grant a gift of land, elevation in his service, immunity or some other favour, and *qmani* so rewarded were called *shedsqalebulni*. The act of conferring

[1] See *Istoriuli Sabutebi Shio-Mghvimis Monastrisa* (*The Historical Documents of the Monastery of Shio-Mghvime*), by Th. Jordania, p. 28.

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GEORGIAN LITERATURE

The Georgian script is, like the Georgian language, ancient and original, and in its perfection to the use for which it is required, it bears the stamp of a venerable individuality.

The first two periods in the history of Georgian literature are that between the sixth and the tenth centuries, which is characterized by the production of works of a spiritual character,[1] translations of Holy Writ and other sacred writings, theses of the Fathers of the Church, edifying compositions and Lives of the Saints; and that between the tenth and twelfth centuries, which saw the development of chronology and history, and the composition of the Georgian epic poems.

Since the sixth century there had taken place a great literary development in the Georgian monasteries which grew up throughout the Byzantine Empire, in Sinai and Palestine and Syria, and on the Mountains of Athos and Olympus. Holy fathers were constantly passing from the hermitages of the just into their native Georgia—not infrequently with the object of raising funds from the devout Bagratid princes. Conversely, serious young men and jaded nobles (how many saints have risen from the beds of the dissipated!) were accustomed to go from Georgia to their national monasteries abroad. The two most remarkable men of this type, towards the latter end of the tenth century, were Torniké,[2] a member of the Meskhian house of Chordvaneli, who was in the Byzantine service and who founded the Iberian monastery on Mount Athos out of the proceeds of a successful military career; and a certain nobleman Ioanné of Ardanuchi who abandoned the service of the Kuropalatês David of Tao to his master's indignation, and became a noted theologian and translator of Greek works into Georgian.

In the monasteries abroad whole families settled and the names of some have survived as copyists and calligraphers; in the ninth century there were the brothers, Zosimé, Ioanné and Kwiriké Sokhastreli on Mount Sinai; and in the eleventh century the numerous family of Dvali at the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Palestine.

On Mount Athos, the leaders of Georgian intellectual life pursued their studies; during the later part of the tenth century, Ioanné of Ardanuchi and his son, Evthimé; and in the eleventh century, Ephrem *Mtsiré* (the Little) and Saba Tukhareli,[3] and

[1] The earliest Georgian manuscripts, palimpsests discovered by Javakhishvili, date from sixth to seventh centuries.

[2] For an account of the important part played by Torniké (or Tornigi) in contemporary Byzantine politics, see Schlumberger, *L'Epopée Byzantine*.

[3] Tukhareli—of Tukharisi in the Chorokhi country.